

Orchard Hill Park

23Oct2011

In the beginning God created heaven and earth.

Before anything else, there was God.

He was not created – He is the creator of all things.

- Before there was earth or sky – before there were trees or mountains
- Before there was space or stars or sun or moon or constellations and galaxies.
- There was God.

After creating heaven and earth, the animals, and all other elements of creation, He created man because His primary purpose in the creation is that He is worshipped.

In order for man to worship God, God must be known. And He is known today because God has revealed himself to His creation.

God has first of all revealed himself through general means, such as nature.

Romans 1.19 Mankind knows the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them. 20 For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. 21 Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. 22 Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools.

28 Since mankind thought it foolish to acknowledge God, God abandoned them to their foolish thinking and let them do things that should never be done. 29 Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious

behavior, and gossip. 30 They are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They invent new ways of sinning, and they disobey their parents. 31 They refuse to understand, break their promises, are heartless, and have no mercy. 32 They know God's justice requires that those who do these things deserve to die, yet they do them anyway. Worse yet, they encourage others to do them, too. (NLT)

So we see that a general knowledge of God is available to all men simply by our observance of the world around us.

But God did not stop there. He continued to reveal himself through special means. One of those ways is the written word – this book we call the Bible.

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| • Spirit | Jn. 4.24 |
| • One Lord | Matt. 12.29 |
| • Living | Josh. 3.10 |
| • Faithful | 1 Cor. 1.9 |
| • True | Jn. 3.33 |
| • Light | 1 John 1.5 |
| • Love | 1 John 4.8 |
| • Righteousness, peace, joy | Rom. 14.17 |
| • Merciful God | Deut. 4.31 |
| • Gracious | 2 Chron. 30.9 |
| • Pure | Prov. 30.5 |
| • Not author of confusion | 1 Cor. 14.33 |
| • Not a man | Num. 23.19 |
| • A consuming fire | Heb. 12.29 |
| • Angry w/ wicked every day | Ps. 7.11 |
| • Jealous | Deut. 4.24 |
| • Greatly to be feared | Ps. 89.7 |
| • God of gods, Lord of lords | Deut. 10.17 |
| • King | Ps. 74.12 |

- In Heaven Eccl. 5.2
- His throne is forever Heb. 1.8
- Righteous in all His works Dan. 9.14
- Knows all things 1 Jn. 3.20
- His ways are not our ways Is. 55.8
- Alpha & Omega, beginning and the end Rev. 1.8
- The great I AM Ex. 3.14
- The Lord Almighty, who was and is and is to come Rev. 4.8
- Able to raise up stones to worship Him Matt. 3.9
- With us Is. 8.10
- Near at hand Luke 21.31
- Strength & power 2 Sam. 22.33
- Sun and shield, the giver of grace and glory Ps. 84.11
- Refuge Deut. 33.27
- Help in time of trouble Ps. 46.1
- God of salvation Ps. 68.20
- Able to take a man's heart of stone & give him a heart of flesh Ezek. 11.19

So we see that God has revealed himself to men through the creation and through His written word. But above all other things, God has revealed himself to us through Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 1.1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making

purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," (Heb 1:1-3 ESV)

When we go back to that first book of the Bible, we discover that God not only created man. He placed him in a perfect environment – in a garden over which man had dominion – and gave him the companionship of a perfect woman.

God gave man only a couple of simple commandments.

- Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.
- Don't eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

But man disobeyed both of those commandments and rebelled against the authority of God. We refer to that as the fall of man – when sin entered into the world and along with it the penalty for sin – which is death.

And that is why the Bible says in Hebrews, "It is appointed unto man once to die, but after that the judgment."

So we, because we are descendants of that first man, Adam, live under the curse of sin and the penalty of sin which is death and eternal separation from the presence of God.

But God already had a plan for that – a plan He refers to as the plan of redemption.

Once Adam sinned, God's plan of redemption went into action to redeem man's fallen condition and to free him from the penalty of sin through the blood of Jesus Christ.

This morning, if there is any desire in any person's heart to know God, then that person must come to Him by way of the Son of God – by way of Jesus Christ.

Acts 4:12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Jesus is God incarnate – He is God in the flesh. God himself stepped out of eternity and came to earth in the form of a

man – the man Christ Jesus – to do what God could not do – that is, to die. He died to do what man could not do – that is, pay the penalty of sin that would reconcile all of creation to God.

So this morning, we want to recognize Jesus for who He is – and the Bible makes it very clear who Jesus is.

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| • Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Prince of Peace, Everlasting Father | Isaiah 9.6 |
| • Savior | 2 Pet. 1.1 |
| • Lord | 1 Cor. 12.3 |
| • Deliverer | Rom. 11.26 |
| • Messiah | Matt. 16.16 |
| • Creator | Eph. 3.9 |
| • Great high priest | Heb. 4.4 |
| • Holy One | Mk. 1.24 |
| • Hope of glory | Col. 1.27 |
| • Image of the invisible God | Heb. 1.3 |
| • Judge of the living & dead | 2 Tim. 4.1 |
| • Fullness of God in bodily form | Col. 2.9 |
| • Bread of life | John 6.35 |
| • Good shepherd | John 10.11 |
| • Only begotten of the Father | John 3.16 |
| • Resurrection & the Life | John 11.25 |
| • The way, truth, & life | John 14.6 |
| • Light of the world | John 8.12 |
| • Word of God made flesh | John 1.1 |
| • Lamb of God, who takes away the
sin of the world | John 1.36 |
| • Alpha & Omega, first & last,
beginning & end | Rev. 22.13 |
| • King of kings, Lord of lords | Rev. 19.16 |

This morning, we acknowledge that Jesus Christ is our Lord and we are here this morning to share His wonderful love and forgiveness with all who are our guests today.

Phil. 2.9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (ESV)

Sometime later, there is coming a day when all of the world will stand before God, and He will judge according to His righteousness.

On that day, every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Then some will rise to spend eternity with Christ in the presence of God the Father.

Others will rise only to find themselves confined to the depths of hell where they will also never die, but spend eternity separated from God in a place of torment.

It's not enough to simply follow God or to say that you believe in Jesus.

James 2:19 You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror.

Mark 1:27 Jesus Christ commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.

Salvation is not a complicated thing. Let me share with you what salvation is all about.

This morning, if there is the slightest desire in your heart to know more about the Christ that I have talked to you about – if there is in your heart any sense of the depth of your sin – any desire to be reconciled to God the Father – I want to tell you that what you are experiencing is the call of God to salvation.

And there is only one acceptable response to that call.

Romans 10:9 If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 13 For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

I am sure that you are all very familiar with John 3.16.

Let me explain to you what that verse means.

“God loves the world – meaning that He loves the people He created – with the kind of love that led Him to give up the greatest thing in His possession –

His one and only unique Son. Everyone who believes in God’s Son – meaning Jesus Christ – receives from God the same kind of life that God has – eternal life – life that lasts forever.”

In other words, He cleanses us from all unrighteousness and places in our hearts the life of Christ.

That is how sinners become saved – how those outside the kingdom of God become members of the kingdom of God.

This morning, we are going to sing another song and give you a chance to respond to God’s invitation. If you believe that God is calling you to salvation, I would love for you to share that with me.